Waller *Esq*; Reg. S. Secret. (9.) *An account of a* Ruminating Man, *lately Living at* Briſtol, *given in to the* R. Society *by the Experienced and learned* Frederick Slare, M. D. *and* Reg. Soc. S. (10.) *A Letter from that incomparable Botaniſt Mr.* John Ray, R. S. Soc. *giving an account of the* Phytographia *of Dr.* Leonard Plukenet, M.D. *lately Publiſhed.*

An Account of a large and curious Map *of the Great* Tartary, *lately Publiſh'd in* Holland, *by Mr.* NICHOLAS WITSEN, *being an Extract of a Letter from the Author thereof, to the Honourable Sir* ROBERT SOUTHWELL *Knt. and* Preſident *of the* Royal Society.

The Honourable NICHOLAS WITSEN *late Ambaſſadour into* England, *and now one of the Principal Burgomaſters of* Amſterdam, *having ſent ſeveral of his New Maps of* Tartary *to the Fellows of the* Royal Society, *the Honourable their* Preſident *was pleaſed to write unto him as followeth*

SIR,

I Have lately had a great Effect of your Bounty in the Maps of *Tartary*. this is *Columbus* like, the Diſcovery of a New World; at leaſt Tydings of thoſe Parts, which from the beginning have layn in the Dark. But the Enterpriſe being ſo vaſt, and the ſucceſs ſo unexpected; the Publick are very impatient to be told by what Magick you have been able to maſter this Work. For it looks in one Part no leſs difficult then a Geographical Deſcription of the Bottom of the Sea; I mean as to thoſe impenetrable Deſarts, the endleſs Boggs and Marſhes, the inacceſſable Mountains and thoſe mighty Tracts, which by their Climate are rendered uninhabitable; ſince all theſe ſeem by Nature to have been condemned to an everlaſting Solitude. Now

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Now for the reſt, when I conſider that the Caravans paſſing between *Muſcovy* and *China* are not frequent; that they are confin'd to certain Paths and Lines of Trade; That the Merchants and common Travellers mind nothing but the Security and Certainty of the Journey, and the Profit that enſues; And that thoſe who ſhould inform them of Extents and Boundaries, are a Rambling and uncultivated Generation, and of various Languages. If after all theſe Impediments, you ſhall yet be able to ſhew the Credibility of your Survey, you need think no more of Fame, but only pray for Humility.

To which Mr. Witſen *was pleaſed to Anſwer to the Effect following.*

SIR,

'TIS almoſt 28 years ſince I Travelled into *Ruſſia*, and being there merely for my own Satisfaction, I not only Converſed with the Inhabitants of thoſe Countreys, but with *Tartars* of all ſorts. There I grew firſt informed not only in the Situation of thoſe Parts, but of ſuch Countries as lay very remote. I have not ceaſed from that time, by various Methods I have found, to ſend Letters unto, and receive Anſwers from the moſt Northern, and North-Eaſt parts of the World. For I have maintain'd a conſtant Correſpondence in *Moſco*, *Aſtracan*, *Georgia*, *Iſpahan*, *Polonia*, and *Conſtantinople*, I have had Letters every year from *Pekin*, the chief City of *China*. I have gathered Volumes of Journals and Regiſters, which ſet forth the Names of Mountains, Rivers, Cities and Towns, together with a vaſt number of Drafts made by my own Order, which deſcribe the Territories that I have mentioned.

'Tis from this Fund, which has been gathering for ſo many years, and by comparing and adjuſting all theſe Materials, and by preſerving without intermiſſion therein, that the Map is made up.

After all, I am far from thinking it has no faults, 'tis very well if ſuch as are found, be not many, or very groſs, I confeſs my own greateſt doubts are about the ſtretching of the Sea-Coaſts. And 'tis therefore that I expreſs them in a faint and pale Colour, to ſignify the uncertainty thereof. But as to the Latitudes, I have more aſſurance of their being well noted, and ſuſpect but little miſtakes, if there be any therein.

I am yet in ſuſpence whether the North-Eaſt Point which you ſee bearing off in the Map, may run quite on to *America*; or how far thither-ward it may reach.

I formerly thought *Nova Zembla* had been a Continent, and when I wrote my Opinion herein to Mr. *Oldenbourg*, he put it into one of his Tranſactions. But I have ſince been better informed, and retracted that Error. And whereas the late Monſieur *Voſſius* would needs perſuade himſelf, as well as he did others to their Ruin, that there was a paſſage to *Japan* by the North, and that the *Tartarian* Countreys behind *Nova Zembla* did immediately decline towards the South; I did always oppoſe it, and think I can even demonſtrate the Impoſſibility thereof. So that what he wrote to encourage Mariners to that attempt, was even directing them to the point of Death, as it afterwards enſu'd.

My intention is, if I live, and may have leiſure for it, to make ſeveral particular Maps of the ſundry Countries contained in this General One, and to give the Deſcriptions which appertain to each.